

**CITY OF WESTMINSTER, MARYLAND  
MAYOR AND COMMON COUNCIL MEETING  
NOVEMBER 8, 2010**

**QUORUM:**

A meeting of the Mayor and Common Council was held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1838 Emerald Hill Lane, Westminster, Maryland on the evening of November 8, 2010, at 7:00 P.M. Mayor Utz; Council President Halstad; Council Members Albert, Chiavacci, Pecoraro, and Wack; City Administrator and Acting City Clerk Wolf, Acting City Treasurer Ehlers; Police Captain D'Antuono, Director of Planning, Zoning, and Development Beyard, Director of Public Works Glass; and City Attorney Levan were present. Chief of Police Spaulding and Director of Recreation and Parks Schroers were excused from attending.

Mayor Utz proclaimed November 2010 as National Home Care and Hospice Month in the City of Westminster. He recognized that the special services provided by Home Care and Hospice are done with great pride and skill. He presented the proclamation to Leslie Gee, Clinical Manager for Carroll Home Care.

Ms. Gee stated that Carroll Home Care and Carroll Hospice, which have been around for over forty years, are part of the Carroll Hospital Center and serve the communities of Carroll, Baltimore, and Frederick Counties. She recognized the new addition of the Dove House, which holds eight to ten patients for in-patient hospice care. She announced that they have just recently expanded their services to Pediatric Palliative Care. Ms. Gee thanked the Mayor and Common Council on behalf of Carroll Home Care and Carroll Hospice for their recognition.

Mayor Utz explained, from personal experience, that those in care and at the end of their lives are treated with great dignity and honor at the Dove House. He recommended them as a charity of choice.

Mayor Utz also declared November 2010 as Municipal Government Works Month in the City of Westminster. He stated that the Mayor and Common Council meetings and upcoming public hearings are great examples of what Municipal Government Works Month is about. The citizens have direct access and are exercising their rights to let the Mayor and Common Council know their opinions and concerns with what is brought before them. Mayor Utz informed the audience that he appreciates their attendance and reminded them that the government works for them at the municipal level.

**MINUTES:**

Upon motion of Mrs. Albert, seconded by Mr. Chiavacci and unanimously passed, the minutes of the Council meeting of October 25, 2010 were approved.

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

Mayor Utz announced that there are four separate public hearings on the agenda for the meeting. Each of the hearings deal with a text amendment and map amendment for the arts and culture overlay zone and a text amendment and map amendment for the neighborhood preservation overlay zone. He stated that those in attendance are able to sign up to comment during any of the hearings and will be called from the list. He informed the audience that the hearings are not a question and answer session, but a community dialog to provide the Mayor and Common Council with both sides of the issues at hand. He added that Walls Reporting, Inc. will record the only official transcript for each of the public hearings. He explained that he will open each of the four public hearings and at the conclusion of testimony for each hearing, he will close the hearing. He went further to say that as each public hearing is opened, he will allow the Director of Planning, Zoning and Development to provide background information, a summary of the report and recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and to answer questions from the Council. Thereafter, public comments will be received.

Mayor Utz explained that each of the individual zoning text and amendments under consideration were the subject of public hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission on October 14, 2010 where each received a favorable recommendation that was forwarded to the Mayor and Common Council in a written report and recommendation. He added that for each hearing, the Zoning Administrator's file will be part of the written record for each hearing. Additionally, a copy of the City's 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the 2009 Community Vision Report, the final report of the Tri-Street Area Advisory Committee, the final report of the Arts and Culture Advisory Committee, the transcript from Walls Reporting, and any written comments received will be made part of the record for each individual hearing.

At 7:11 pm, Mayor Utz opened the first public hearing pertaining to Zoning Text Amendment No. ZTA 10-2. He explained that this text amendment would add new Article IXC to the Westminster City Code entitled "Arts and Culture Overlay Zone" and that the ordinance to implement the zoning text amendment, Ordinance No. 815, was introduced before the Mayor and Common Council on September 13, 2010.

Mr. Beyard reported that Zoning Text Amendment 10-2 was the result of the work of the City's Arts and Culture Task Force. The Task Force was created as a result of a recommendation by the Tri-Street Area Advisory Committee. Their goal was to look at the possibilities of allowing art related uses on properties in the Tri-Street area to promote economic vitality, to convert some of the homes back to single-family status, and also to improve the climate as far as public safety. Upon the completion of their work, the Task Force made a series of recommendations, including the arts and culture overlay zone which would allow a property owner to have a portion of their house devoted to the production and selling of their artwork and the ability to display some small signage outside. He explained that this would be a natural connection between McDaniel College and the downtown area, utilizing the Carroll Arts Center as an anchor. Mr. Beyard stated that the map, which is also part of their recommendation, is the

subject of the next public hearing.

With no comments or questions from the Common Council, Mayor Utz opened the dialog to the audience where the following citizens commented in favor of the overlay zoning:

- Sara Deluca of 180 West Main Street
- Steve Deluca of 180 West Main Street
- Lyndi McNulty of 195 West Main Street
- Pamela Zappardino, owner of Off Track Art at 11 Liberty Street
- Rebecca Orenstein of 64 Pennsylvania Avenue

*To view the official transcript of the public hearing, contact the City Administrative Offices at 56 West Main Street.*

With no more comments from the public, Mayor Utz closed the public hearing for Zoning Text Amendment No. ZTA 10-2 – “Arts and Culture Overlay Zone” at 7:23 pm.

Mayor Utz opened the second public hearing at 7:24 pm stating that the subject pertains to Sectional Zoning Map Amendment No. SMA 10-2 – Tri-Street Area Arts and Culture Neighborhood. He explained that the map amendment would place properties outlined in the application, generally located in the triangle between Pennsylvania Avenue, Union Street and West Main Street, in the new Arts and Culture Overlay Zone. He announced that Ordinance No. 817 and accompanying written decision is scheduled for introduction before the Mayor and Common Council and discussion later in the agenda.

Mr. Beyard reiterated that the area to be included in the arts and culture overlay zone contains the residentially zoned properties from the intersection of West Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, going up Pennsylvania Avenue to Union Street, and then down Union Street to West Main. He explained that there are no changes to current zoning. If it is commercial currently, it will continue to be commercial. He mentioned that they found a tremendous amount of business owned properties in the area that are being used as residential. There will be no changes to them; therefore, some of those properties, in the future, could be used as businesses. Mr. Beyard noted that the areas where Vince’s Seafood, Avenue Tailors, the new pizza shop, and PNC Bank are zoned business and will continue to be business, as well as the businesses at the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Union Street where Dutterer’s Florist, a laundry mat, a Chinese restaurant, and a convenience store are located. The overlay would go on the residential zoned properties, allowing up to 50% of the interior of the main structure for art uses, which are defined in the ordinance.

Mr. Pecoraro questioned whether any of the properties, particularly along Pennsylvania Avenue, were owned by McDaniel College and that the zoning along there would remain the same.

Mr. Beyard was not aware if the college owned any of the properties, but he reassured

Mr. Pecoraro that if the property is zoned residential, it will be zoned residential in the future. He added that what they are hoping for is to see some of the properties that were broken up into rental units converted back to simple-family status.

Mr. Pecoraro recapped that the overlay zone encompasses the existing zoning and creates special permissions to people engaged in art related pursuits.

Mr. Chiavacci, after consulting with Dr. Seidel, reported that McDaniel College does not own any of the properties in the proposed area.

With no additional comments from the Common Council or the public, Mayor Utz closed the public hearing for the Sectional Zoning Map Amendment No. SMA 10-2 – “Tri-Street Area Arts and Culture Neighborhood at 7:30 pm.

At 7:31pm, Mayor Utz opened the third public hearing which pertains to Zoning Text Amendment No. ZTA 10-3. He explained that this text amendment would add new Article VIVD to the Westminster City Code entitled "Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone". He added that the ordinance to implement this zoning text amendment, Ordinance No. 816, was introduced before the Mayor and Common Council on October 11, 2010.

Mr. Beyard summarized that in 2009, after a process of community surveys, public hearings, public work sessions, etc., the Mayor and Common Council adopted the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. He explained that the City has implemented various zoning actions since then, including the creation of an Arts and Culture Overlay Zone and Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone, currently under consideration. The purpose of the Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone is to provide for the preservation of the historic character and physical setting of the City's traditional residential neighborhoods by promoting residential uses and directing more intense uses to other suitable locations in the City. He added that the new zone would be a mapped zone which would be superimposed on properties in the R-7,500 Residential Zone and R-10,000 Residential Zone in certain traditional neighborhoods. He stated that if this zone is placed upon properties, the permitted uses and special exceptions uses authorized in the underlying zones would be modified and superseded by the uses contained in the Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone. Those uses are primarily residential. Mr. Beyard reported that based on the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the City recognized the importance of preserving the historic character and physical setting of Westminster. The City's traditional residential neighborhoods and small town charm are viewed as an attraction by current residents and visitors to the community and promote Westminster's heritage.

One of the City's great strengths are its traditional residential neighborhoods, containing historic homes, well-maintained structures and grounds, and families living in these communities who take great pride in their neighborhood. Without a zone like the Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone, there is the potential in the underlying zones for uses that promote noise, traffic, parking congestion, flight, accumulation of solid

waste and obstruction of views. He explained that the underlying zone would be the R-7,500 and R-10,000 Zone properties and the overlay would modify the current permitted and special exception uses that are presently allowed. If adopted and placed upon properties in the future, those uses would be primarily residential. He added that if something is a nonconforming use now, it would continue unless it stopped under nonconforming status. He stated that a lot questions and feedback have been received as to some of the things that have been said that the City is going to do. He used the in-law apartments as an example. He informed the Mayor and Common Council that if a property is currently zoned R-10,000, there is no provision or current law for in-law apartment and that would not be changed with this. He also added that the text amendment has nothing to do with putting on an addition or painting the house. The City received concerns from the residents about their neighborhoods or the encroachment of business. He explained that this new zone would help retain the residential character of the neighborhoods by eliminating more intense business uses.

Dr. Wack questioned and Mr. Beyard confirmed that there is nothing that prevents or precludes a homeowner or property owner from renting the property before or after the text amendment.

Mr. Pecoraro clarified that, again, the City is creating an overlay zone over the existing zoning of these neighborhoods that will not preclude people from exercising their current rights, but make the prospect of future commercial development less ambiguous. He added that the City is expecting these areas to be maintained as primarily residential areas.

Mr. Beyard stated that there are some uses that the City does not have control over, but if the zone is adopted and applied, there would be a very high probability as to what the future would be. There would be no question as to how a neighbor's property would be used in the future since it would be seen in the law.

With no comments or questions from the Common Council, Mayor Utz opened the dialog to the audience where the following citizens commented both for the overlay zone and in opposition to the zone, as well as asking a number of clarifying questions:

- Patrick Martin of 170 Willis Street
- Mary Elizabeth Myers of 95 Willis Street
- Arthur Palaia of 118 Willis Street
- Kristen Vandervalk of 140 Willis Street
- Paul Derstine of 142 Willis Street
- Madeleine Miller of 124 Willis Street
- Jean Picardi of 112 Willis Street
- Susan Thomas of 92 Willis Street
- Doris Wisner of 145 Willis Street
- José H. Pineda of Baltimore, Maryland and former Westminster resident
- Mr. Fisher of 114 Willis Street
- Bruce Devault of 1 Park Avenue

- Daniel Hoff of 23 Park Avenue
- Lou Landean of 1617 Old Taneytown Road
- Lou Howard of 100 Willis Street
- Robert Myers of 101 Willis Street
- Barbara Zepp of 106 North Center Street
- Mary Ellen Shaffer of 84 Willis Street
- Cynthia Ewing of 345 Margaret Avenue and former Westminster business owner
- Joyce Myers of 179 Willis Street
- R. Gregory Goodell of 171 Willis Street
- Margaret Bair of 108 Willis Street
- Carroll Yingling, Main Street business owner
- George Pasteur of 174 Willis Street
- Dan Martin, son of Patrick Martin, of 170 Willis Street
- Beverly Fash of 45 North Court Street
- Meg McPherson of 154 Willis Street

*\* To view the official transcript of the public hearing, contact the City Administrative Offices at 56 West Main Street.*

With no more comments from the public, Mayor Utz closed the public hearing for Zoning Text Amendment No. ZTA 10-3 – “Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone” at 9:08 pm.

Mayor Utz opened the fourth and final public hearing at 9:08 pm stating that it pertains to the Sectional Zoning Map Amendment No. SMA 10-1 – “Belle Grove Square Neighborhood” and “Willis Street Neighborhood”. He referred to Mr. Beyard for further explanation.

Mr. Beyard explained the areas of the Belle Grove Square Neighborhood and the Willis Street Neighborhood that are proposed for the overlay zoning map. The original area of Belle Grove Square included West Green Street on the north, Cover Lane to the rear of Bond Street to the west, the alley to the rear of Park Avenue to the east, and Chase Street to the south. He stated that the City received a recommendation to have the overlay map match their neighborhood association which would include St. Paul’s Church and the property down to Dover Lane, as well as the property across from the church at the corner of Green and Bond Streets. Mr. Beyard explained that the Willis Street overlay would include the area along Willis Street from Longwell Avenue to the west, North Court Street to the east, Court Lane to the south and to the north, and the allies to the rear of Willis Street including 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Key Street. The property owned by Ms. Myers, to the rear of Myer’s Funeral Home and accessed off the alley, would be excluded from the overlay.

Mr. Pecoraro clarified that there are two different items being discussed. The text amendment which is the ordinance that creates the overlay zones, and then a separate action is applying that overlay zone to a map.

Mayor Utz opened the dialog to the audience where the following citizens commented favorably on the zoning overlay:

- Beverly Fash of 45 North Court Street
- Mary Elizabeth Myers of 95 Willis Street
- Paul Derstine of 142 Willis Street
- Bruce Devault of 1 Park Avenue

*\* To view the official transcript of the public hearing, contact the City Administrative Offices at 56 West Main Street.*

With no more comments from the public, Mayor Utz closed the public hearing for Sectional Zoning Map Amendment No. SMA 10-1 – “Belle Grove Square Neighborhood” and “Willis Street Neighborhood” at 9:22 pm.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR:**

Dr. Wack moved to approve the Consent Calendar, which consisted of the approval of the Procurement of Disaster Recovery Equipment and the approval of Contract for Consulting Services for Financial Model. Mrs. Albert seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

### **REPORT FROM THE MAYOR:**

Mayor Utz reported that they had a great visit on Main Street with McDaniel College President Dr. Roger Casey, his colleagues, and the Board of Trustees. He stated that, unlike what was reported in the Carroll County Times newspaper, the event was not about Dr. Casey, but about the City of Westminster and McDaniel College coming together to be more of a college town. He added that the City is trying to reach out to all of its partners; not just business, but also the college community. He feels that the Trustees, Dr. Casey and the staff were given a very broad look of what actually goes on in the City. Mayor Utz stated that he was astounded to know that many of the business owners were already in communications with the college, which tells him that the citizens and the business community do come together without the City assistance. He felt the event showed extraordinary planning and thanked Ms. Wolf, the City’s Planning Department, and other City staff for working with Dr. Casey and his staff to put this event together.

### **REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES:**

No reports from standing committees.

### **ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS:**

Mr. Glass summarized that Ordinance No. 822 is a revision of Ordinance No. 813 – Stormwater Management, which was adopted July 26, 2010. He explained that the revisions include a grandfathering clause for projects meeting certain conditions that was omitted in error, and also some changes to align and eliminate potential conflict with the Carroll County Storm Water Design Manual and practices. He stated that the revisions were reviewed and vetted by the City of Westminster Public Works Department, City Attorney Levan, and the Carroll County Bureau of Resource Management, as well as approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment. Mr. Pecoraro moved to suspend the rules that interfere with the immediate introduction and adoption of Ordinance No. 822. Dr. Wack seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Dr. Wack motioned to introduce and adopt Ordinance No. 822. Mr. Chiavacci seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Pecoraro motioned to adopt Ordinance No. 815 – Add New Article IXC to Chapter 164 of the City Code entitled “Arts and Culture Overlay Zone” (ZTA No. 10-2). Dr. Wack seconded.

Dr. Wack thanked the members of the Arts and Culture Task Force for all the hard work they did that greatly informed the development of Ordinance No. 815. He feels that it is going to be a real positive impact on the areas included.

Mr. Pecoraro added that he is pleased to see another piece of the report presented by the Tri-Street Area Advisory Committee moving forward. He stated that the process, which began several years ago, demonstrates tremendous citizen involvement and participation in trying to continue to protect that community in the City and to move it forward into a better state. He continued by saying that he is very proud of what has been accomplished and he is glad to be able to move forward with the arts and culture zone which will protect the residential character of the community while trying to take advantage of the culture and artistic opportunities that the college, Arts Council and other institutes present for the City.

With a motion and a second on the floor, Ordinance No. 815 – Add New Article IXC to Chapter 164 of the City Code entitled “Arts and Culture Overlay Zone” (ZTA No. 10-2) was adopted.

Mr. Chiavacci motioned to introduce Ordinance No. 817 – Adoption of Sectional Zoning Map Amendment No. SMA 10-2 and Accompanying Written Decision – “Tri-Street Area Arts and Culture Neighborhood” and Mrs. Albert seconded.

Mr. Pecoraro feels that the creation of the “Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone” will be a very good tool to have and will allow the City to accomplish the protection of important neighborhoods, which has been a goal for many years. He explained that as an overlay zone, it will lie over the existing zoning so that residents can continue to do what they can currently do with their properties, but are protected from the commercial creep that quickly spreads once started and changes the character of the community.



Dr. Wack thanked the citizens for attending and participating in the public hearings. He stated that he kept track of the comments of those in favor and opposed and the results were roughly even. He added that even those opposed, also spoke against the commercialization of neighborhood and had other issues with either the process or specific situations on the street. He feels that there is a fairly strong consensus that the City should be making efforts to preserve the residential character of particular neighborhoods.

Mr. Chiavacci also thanked those in attendance for coming out. He stated he, as well as other council members, is a resident on Willis Street and there are clearly some differences of opinion on the street. He explained that he appreciated that everyone was calm and well-spoken in presenting their concerns in an articulate and professional manner.

With a motion and second on the floor, Ordinance No. 817 – Adoption of Sectional Zoning Map Amendment No. SMA 10-2 and Accompanying Written Decision – “Tri-Street Area Arts and Culture Neighborhood” was introduced.

Dr. Wack moved to introduce Ordinance No. 818 – Introduction of Ordinance No. 818 – Adoption of Sectional Zoning Map Amendment No. SMA 10-1 and Accompanying Written Decision – “Belle Grove Square Neighborhood” and “Willis Street Neighborhood” with the proposed amendments, which include the expansions of Belle Grove Square, the deletion of 111 Longwell Avenue, and the addition of 45, 49, and 51 North Court Street. Mr. Pecoraro seconded.

Mrs. Albert questioned whether the members of the Common Council that reside on Willis Street were to recuse themselves from the matter.

Ms. Levan stated that, in her opinion, there would be no conflict of interest that prevents those council members from acting on the map amendment which happens to impact the zone in which they live.

President Halstad added that it would require a direct impact for those council members to recuse themselves.

Mrs. Albert explained that she initially learned of the proposed Neighborhood Preservation Overlay Zone for Belle Grove Square and Willis Street while preparing for the October 14<sup>th</sup> Planning and Zoning Commission meeting and, as the Commission liaison member, she voted in favor to move the zoning text forward to the Mayor and Common Council for consideration at a public meeting knowing that there was some controversy, concerns, many questions, and misunderstandings. She stated that she is reluctant to vote in favor for the zoning change for Willis Street which is most likely to have a negative effect on the welfare of a self-sufficient, tolerant, and friendly community. She recommended that the Mayor and Common Council exclude Willis Street from the introduction of Ordinance No. 818.

Mr. Pecoraro questioned procedures for separating the two neighborhoods and at what point are the two maps no longer separable from the ordinance.

Ms. Levan explained that the maps could be separated and then introduced with two separate ordinance numbers.

Mr. Beyard added that that was probably the preferred way and seems to meet the intent of what Mr. Pecoraro asked.

After some discussion, Mr. Pecoraro recommended that the ordinance be introduced as it is, then take the opportunity in the next couple of weeks to meet with the people from the Willis Street community for an educational forum. People want to understand what the City is trying to do. He feels that once they understand, they will not be as uncomfortable and realize that the City is acting for the best reasons.

Mr. Chiavacci stated that he agrees that there needs to be more discussion about the City's intent and the public needs to be a part. He added that there are some people that do not want this and they may or may not change their opinion, but there are a fair number who need help understanding it better.

With a motion and second on the floor, the motion passed 4-1 with Mrs. Albert opposing and Ordinance No. 818 – Introduction of Ordinance No. 818 – Adoption of Sectional Zoning Map Amendment No. SMA 10-1 and Accompanying Written Decision – “Belle Grove Square Neighborhood” and “Willis Street Neighborhood” with the proposed amendments was introduced.

Mr. Beyard summarized that the introduction of Ordinance No. 821 would repeal the current Chapter 83 of the Westminster City Code entitled "Floodplain Management" and re-enact a new Chapter 83 that contains the language of the State of Maryland's Model Floodplain Ordinance. He explained that FEMA recently updated the Flood Insurance Study (FIS) for Westminster along with the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) which are decades old. He stated that the National Flood Insurance Program was adopted in the City in the early 1970's followed by adoption of the first FIS and FIRM in 1977.

Mr. Pecoraro questioned how financing was received for homes that were in the flood zones.

Mr. Beyard responded that until major events happened, no one had looked, but as rates became more attractive to refinance, the banks finally noticed that they were in a flood area and they needed flood insurance. This drove FEMA to realize that they had a responsibility and they needed to perform a new study. He stated that the City notified every property owner in Westminster that would be affected by the change. Mr. Beyard explained that the last step in the process is to have the Mayor and Common Council adopt the State of Maryland Model Floodplain Ordinance so that it can take effect by January 1, 2011. He added that a floodplain ordinance that meets Federal and State standards needs to be in place in order to be eligible for the National Flood Insurance

Program. Upon motion of Mr. Chiavacci, seconded by Mr. Pecoraro and unanimously passed, Ordinance No. 821 was introduced.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Dr. Ethan Seidel, Vice President of Administration and Finance at McDaniel College, summarized that in 2000, the college issued variable rate interest bonds through the City of Westminster as the issuing authority. The bonds are remarketed every week to determine the weekly interest rate and they are backed by a bank letter of credit. He stated that the original issue was in excess of \$20M. The outstanding balance now is \$17, 875,000 which is still in excess of what used to be the threshold for doing bank qualified debt which was \$10M. He explained that the limit was raised recently to \$30M as part of the Federal government stimulus effort. A typical letter of credit lasts three years, which means that every three years the college has to go through the renewal process. He stated that with a bank qualifying loan, the college can get an extended term and they are looking at a seven year term which would then reduce that need to constantly be renewing a letter of credit. Dr. Seidel explained that in order to make that change in the mode of McDaniel's bond issue, they need a resolution from the City of Westminster as the original issuing authority. He added that this is not new debt or new borrowing; it is moving the debt from one mode to another and McDaniel needs the original issuing authority's approval to do so.

Herman Rosenthal of Whiteford, Taylor, & Preston L.L.P. and Bond Council for McDaniel College added that the provision referred to by Dr. Seidel will expire at the end of the year so it is critical, for tax purposes, that this process is completed and closed before the end of the year.

Upon motion of Dr. Wack, seconded by Mr. Chiavacci and unanimously passed, Resolution 10-8 was approved.

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

President and C.E.O. of the Westminster Fire and Hose Company No. 1 Bob Cumberland thanked the Mayor for the invitation to participate in the walk down Main Street with Dr. Casey, but his schedule prevented him from attending. However, he looks forward to the opportunity to sit down with the college to talk about creating a better relationship and look at programs to help keep the volunteer system going. He then reported that the Fire Department should be getting some FEMA reimbursement from damages received during the February snowstorms. He continued by say that the department received a grant from the State Fire Marshal and the Maryland State Fireman's Association to purchase fire prevention materials to distribute throughout the community. Mr. Cumberland also reported that they have been successful with the County in refunding their bond from 1997 with a lower interest rate which will save the department money. Finally, he reported that the year-to-date fire loss for Westminster is \$616,950.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS:**

Rebecca Orenstein of 64 Pennsylvania Avenue asked the Mayor and Common Council for direction with developing a Reggae and Blues festival in the City next summer. She added that it is immensely popular in Howard and Montgomery Counties and that she has several bands lined up. She feels that it is a very inclusive festival which is important. She is interested in possibly holding the festival either at Dutterer's Park, on Main Street, or Pennsylvania Avenue.

Mr. Chiavacci advised Ms. Orenstein that an event like that would fall under the direction of the Recreation and Parks Department and she should contact Mr. Schroers for correct procedures for setting up the event. He added that he thinks the festival is a great idea.

Ms. Orenstein continued by saying that she recommends that the Mayor and Common Council visit Birdie's Café to see their recycling process and consider an ordinance for recycling at the commercial level. She stated that café owner, Sherri Hosfeld Joseph is a commercial recycler and saves \$100 a month on her garbage bill by recycling. She explained that is not bad for business; it is a simple and "green" process. Ms. Orenstein concluded by thanking Mr. Beyard and Street Department Superintendent Mr. Bloom for their assistance with the removal of her leaves. She stated that when she talked with Mr. Beyard, he was articulate, helpful, and kind and Mr. Bloom was quick to respond. She expressed her appreciation for the City staff's cooperation with citizens.

Lori Graham of 118 Pennsylvania Avenue reminded the audience the Miracle of Main Street is November 27<sup>th</sup>. She informed the Mayor and Common Council that a float is being put together for them to ride on. She also announced that Santa will be arriving in Westminster in a way that he has not come in almost twenty years.

### **ADJOURN:**

Council President Halstad adjourned the meeting at 10:16 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth L. Fahey